

Preparing for Equipment Review

As for the USDA Dairy Grading Branch giving a total or exact cost for an equipment review is not possible due to federal regulation. We have maximum lodging and M&IE allowances that can change from month to month. These rates are set by the State Department so there is no way for us to predict a change. If the trip is for domestic travel a minimum of 7 days advance notice is required before the requested inspection date. If a trip is to a foreign country 30 days advanced notice is required before the requested date of the inspection.

Therefore by the time the trip actually takes place the rates may have changed and an adjustment would need to be made at the time of the billing.

We charge from door to door. Hourly rates are currently \$68.00 for regular time and \$102.00 for overtime. Overtime would be charged for any time after 8 hours and any time spent in travel on weekends or working on a weekend. Other expenses would be for airfare, land transportation, mileage to and from the airport, parking, hotel, M&IE and other miscellaneous expenses.

As for airfare we are required to take government contract carriers and cannot get an exact cost until the flight is booked.

As for the actual USDA inspection; a finished unit(s) would need to be made available for review at the manufacturing facility or site of final assembly, and all material certifications. If available a detailed set of engineering drawings of equipment will also need to be made available for the inspector to review. If only drawings are available a final inspection of a finished unit(s) will be required at a later date.

If the review is for a TPV, a finished unit(s) will need to be made available for review at your manufacturing facility or site of final assembly. All material certifications along with your Engineering Design and Technical Construction File (EDTCF) will need to be made available at the inspection site. A detailed set of engineering drawings will also need to be made available for the inspector to review at the inspection site. This would include all options that can be supplied with the equipment even though they may not be part of a current order. Your quality control manual will need to be made available to the inspector and he will need to check critical control points. The inspector will also need to see the operator's manual for the unit. All information will need to be printed in English.

Before I can schedule an equipment review I need to have you fill out an Equipment Review Request. This can be found at www.ams.usda.gov/dairygrading. Please fill this out and fax it back to me as soon as possible.